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Mattox urged to open JFK assassination inquiry

By Earl Golz
American-Statesman Staff

Attorney General Jim Mattox met for several hours Tuesday with private researchers who are urging him to open an investigation into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The researchers showed Mattox some of the evidence they say points toward three gunmen, including Dallas police officer Roscoe Anthony White, as those who fired the shots that killed Kennedy in Dallas' Dealey Plaza in 1963. Two previous federal investigations have concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald fired the shots that killed Kennedy and wounded Texas Gov. John Connally.

Meeting with Mattox in his Austin office were Bernard Fensterwald, executive director of the Assassination Archives and Research Center of Washington, and J. Gary Shaw, co-director of the JFK Assassination Information Center of Dallas.

"They have a number of things that are very interesting," said Mattox, who has five months left in office. "They are going to provide us with additional information. We are going to have a conference among ourselves and see if we feel like we can move forward."

Fensterwald and Shaw are skeptical of the findings of the Warren Commission in 1964 and the House Select Committee on Assassinations in 1979. The Warren Commission found that Oswald, acting alone, fired all the shots. The select committee concluded that Oswald fired the fatal shots from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository, but that a second person also fired a shot that missed from behind a fence atop the grassy knoll to the front and right of the presidential limousine.

Mattox said he also wants to talk to Ricky White, 29, of Midland who has stated he believes his father, Roscoe White, fired two shots that struck the president in the throat and head. White said he read in his father's diary, which has since disappeared, that he fired from behind the fence while two other members of an assassination team shot from the Book Depository and Records buildings to the rear of the limousine.

Mattox said he hasn't decided yet what to do, but that his office has jurisdiction.

"The attorney general can investigate anything," he said. "Waggoner Carr (attorney general in 1963) conducted a major investigation of this when he was in office. He cooperated with the federal investigation."

Ricky White also has determined that his father boarded the same boat with Oswald for Japan as both began their overseas duty as Marines in 1957, and that his mother worked as a hostess in Jack Ruby's Carousel Club in Dallas two months before the assassination. Ruby fatally shot Oswald two days after the assassination while Oswald was in police custody in the basement of the Dallas City Hall.